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DEPT FOR ARA/CEN - SCHOFIELD

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
 TAGS: PINT PHUM PREL, PTER NJ CASC(HALL, SAM NESLEY)
 SUBJ: SANDINISTA MEDIA ALLEGE SAM HALL HAS "TERRORIST"
 - BACKGROUND, PROMISE CONSULAR ACCESS

REF: MANAGUA 8070

1. (U) UNDER THE HEADLINE "HALL IS A TERRORIST," OFFICIAL FSLN ORGAN BARRICADA REPORTED DECEMBER 16 THAT ALLEGED AMERICAN "SPY" SAM NESLEY HALL HAD PARTICIPATED IN A PLOT TO ASSASSINATE U.S. AMBASSADOR TO COSTA RICA, LEWIS TAMBS, IN ORDER TO PLACE THE BLAME FOR THE ASSASSINATION ON THE NICARAGUAN GOVERNMENT. THE ARTICLE, DATED LINE NEW YORK, IDENTIFIED CUBAN JESUS GARCIA, NOW IN A FLORIDA PRISON FOR ILLEGAL ARMS TRAFFICKING, AS THE SOURCE OF THE BIZARRE REVELATION. ACCORDING TO GARCIA, HE, HALL AND FDN CHIEF ADOLFO CALERO HAD MET IN A MIAMI HOTEL IN JANUARY 1985 TO PLAN THE MURDER. GARCIA REPORTEDLY CLAIMED THAT EACH OF THE PARTICIPANTS WAS TO HAVE RECEIVED ONE MILLION US DOLLARS FROM COLOMBIAN DRUG TRAFFICKERS "FURIOUS" WITH TAMBS' ANTI-DRUG ACTIVITIES WHILE U.S. AMBASSADOR TO COLOMBIA.

2. (U) BARRICADA ALSO ANNOUNCED THAT A FOURTH PERSON INVOLVED IN THE ALLEGED ASSASSINATION PLOT, "MERCENARY" STEVEN CARR, WAS RECENTLY FOUND DEAD IN A LOS ANGELES SUBURB "36 HOURS AFTER RELATING HIS INVOLVEMENT WITH THE CONTRA TO THE FBI." APPARENTLY, DEDUCED BARRICADA, AFTER FAILING TO CARRY OUT THE ASSASSINATION PLAN, HALL AND CARR CONTINUED WORKING WITH THE NICARAGUAN RESISTANCE. CARR HAD SPENT NEARLY A YEAR IN JAIL IN

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COSTA RICA. STATED BARRICADA. AND ONLY RECENTLY HAD RETURNED TO THE UNITED STATES. BEFORE CARR DIED, HE HAD BEEN "TRYING TO CONTACT" THE SENATOR IN CHARGE OF INVESTIGATING THE IRAN ARMS SALE/CONTRA AID AFFAIR, AVERRED BARRICADA. THE ARTICLE REFERRED TO A "RADIO WBAI" BROADCAST WHICH DESCRIBED CARR'S DEATH, APPARENTLY DUE TO A DRUG OVERDOSE, AS HAVING OCCURRED UNDER "VERY SUSPICIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES."

3. (U) GON-SUPPORTED EL NUEVO DIARIO (END), FOR ITS PART, REPORTED IN ITS DECEMBER 16 EDITION FURTHER BIOGRAPHICAL DATA ON HALL. ACCORDING TO END, HALL WAS AN ANTI-TERRORISM EXPERT AND MERCENARY WHO HAD PREVIOUSLY WORKED IN ANGOLA AND ZIMBABWE (REFTEL). HALL REPORTEDLY HAD BEEN A "STAR ATHLETE" AT THE UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON AND IN THE U.S. AIR FORCE, FROM WHICH HE RESIGNED IN 1961. HE ALSO HAD SERVED AS A "REPRESENTATIVE FOR HIS STATE IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES" (SIC) IN 1964 AND 1965, AND IS THE SON OF A FORMER DAYTON, OHIO MAYOR, ACCORDING TO END.

4. (U) WITH RESPECT TO THE EMBASSY'S REQUEST FOR CONSULAR ACCESS TO HALL, SANDINISTA EVENING NEWS ON DECEMBER 15 SAID THE GON WOULD PERMIT ACCESS UNDER THE GENEVA (SIC) CONVENTION AT THE "APPROPRIATE TIME." END REPEATED THE ANNOUNCEMENT, BUT CITED THE VIENNA CONVENTION.

5. (U) COMMENT: AS OF 1700 LOCAL, DECEMBER 16, THE FOREIGN MINISTRY HAD NOT RESPONDED TO OUR REQUEST FOR CONSULAR ACCESS.

6. (C) DESPITE BARRICADA'S RHETORIC ABOUT AN ASSASSINATION PLOT, WE NOTE AN ONGOING ATTEMPT BY THE GOVERNMENT CONTROLLED MEDIA TO PORTRAY HALL DIFFERENTLY THAN HASENFUS. IN THE HASENFUS CASE, THE DETAINEE WAS PORTRAYED AS AN UNPROFESSIONAL, UNEMPLOYED AND POLITICALLY UNINVOLVED VICTIM OF THE "NORTH AMERICAN ADMINISTRATION'S IMMORAL EFFORTS" TO OUST THE SANDINISTA GOVERNMENT. SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE HALL CASE, HOWEVER, THE MEDIA APPEAR TO BE CONCENTRATING ON THE PRINCIPAL, CASTING HIM AS AN ANTI-TERRORIST EXPERT AND MERCENARY WITH SUBSTANTIAL EXPERIENCE AND TRAINING. BERGOLD

END OF MESSAGE

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